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THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION

BY

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The Executive Committee of the Association for International Conciliation wish to arouse the interest of the American people in the progress of the movement for promoting international peace and relations of comity and good fellowship between nations. To this end they print and circulate documents giving information as to the progress of these movements, in order that individual citizens, the newspaper press, and organizations of various kinds may have readily available accurate information on these subjects. A list of publications will be found on page 15.

Christian L. Lange, the author of the present pamphlet, formerly Secretary of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, is now Honorary Councilor at the Nobel Institute. In 1907 he was Technical Delegate from Norway to the Hague Conference, and since 1909 he has been Secretary General of the Interparliamentary Union.

THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION

On October 31, 1887, a delegation of British Members of Parliament and of leaders of Trades Unions were introduced to President Cleveland at the White House by Mr. Andrew Carnegie. They had come to submit to the President an address, signed by 234 Members of Parliament, in favor of a treaty of arbitration between Great Britain and the United States. At that time such treaties between states were very rare; no European country had as yet signed a single such document, nor had the United States. Some South American States only were parties to them.

This movement which William Randal Cremer had initiated in England found its echo in America, and during the legislative session of 1887–1888 Congress was flooded with memorials, some containing the names of very prominent persons, in favor of international arbitration. Nevertheless, the project of an Anglo-American treaty failed; the only outcome of the movement was the vote by the Senate in 1890 of a resolution favoring general arbitration treaties.

FOUNDATION OF THE UNION

This effort, however, was very important: out of it the INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION was born.

Cremer had learned that FRÉDÉRIC PASSY, leader of the Peace Party in the French Chamber, had already voiced the cause of arbitration there, and that he had found considerable support. In 1888 Cremer opened communications with Passy, and on October 31, 1888, exactly a year after the interview at the White House, a meeting was held in Paris, attended by twenty-five French and nine British parliamentarians. The pro-

gramme of the meeting was strictly limited to the support of the efforts of the last years in favor of arbitration treaties between France and the United States and between Great Britain and the United States. Nobody was sanguine enough to dream even of an Arbitration Treaty between France and Great Britain.

The next meeting, which is considered as the first INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE properly speaking, took place, again in Paris, in the following year, during the World's Fair, on June 29 and 30, 1889. It was really international in character: ninety-six members of nine different parliaments attended; fifty-five Frenchmen, thirty British, five Italians, while each of the following nations was represented by one member: Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Liberia, Spain and the United States. The Conference was opened by JULES SIMON and presided over by FRÉDÉRIC PASSY.

In one of its resolutions the Conference gave the fundamental reason of the interparliamentary institution: "The Conduct of Governments tending to become more and more the expression only of ideas and sentiments voiced by the body of citizens, it is for the electors to lead the policy of their country in the direction of justice, of right and of the brotherhood of nations."

DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNION

Up to the present time (end of 1912) the members of the Union have met seventeen times in Conference: twice in Paris (1889 and 1900), twice in London (1890 and 1906), four times at Brussels (1895, 1897, 1905 and 1910), once in each of the following European capitals: Rome (1891), Berne (1892), The Hague (1894), Budapesth (1896), Christiania (1899),

Vienna (1903), Berlin (1908). Once the Interparliamentarians have crossed the Atlantic to meet on American soil at St. Louis and in Washington in 1904. In September, 1912, the 17th Conference was held at Geneva, in Switzerland.

WORK OF THE UNION

The parliamentarians that founded the Union in Paris in 1889 very narrowly circumscribed its object through its name. It was called the INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION, another proof of the power of concentration of its founder, Randal Cremer. There is no doubt that through this rigid exclusion of utopian aims, through the accentuation of one practical aim, the institution appealed to the common sense of hard-headed politicians, and it was thus possible, during the first difficult years, to win the confidence and adhesion of men who otherwise would certainly have held aloof. But as the Union progressed in numbers and its influence extended, other problems than those of arbitration were discussed, all, however, relating to the progressive evolution and organization of the Society of Nations. The Conferences have passed resolutions regarding neutrality and the laws of war. They have several times declared in favor of the immunity of private property at sea during war, a reform so ardently demanded by the common interests of peaceful commerce. Two Conferences have adopted a *voeu* in favor of the elaboration of a Code of International Law. Some of them have discussed the problems relating to the growth of international armaments.

But up to the present time the Interparliamentarians have always limited themselves to the discussion of

questions relating to International Law; they have never discussed economic questions and they have always expressly refused to pronounce themselves on problems of a political nature, in which the interests of different states might be opposed.

The latter principle is one inevitably bound up with the character of the institution itself. Because the Union is composed of responsible statesmen, belonging to nations whose legitimate interests may from time to time be in conflict, it would inevitably compromise its own authority if it raised its voice for or against this or the other practical solution of international conflicts. The Interparliamentary gatherings have, without exception, always restricted themselves to the advocacy of peaceful and judicial methods for the settlement of conflicts.

THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION

The two first Interparliamentary Conferences had only treated one side of the problem of arbitration, namely, the conclusion of treaties stipulating the obligation for the states to submit conflicts to arbitration.

The Rome Conference, in 1891, tackled another side of the problem: it invited the Interparliamentary Committees to put on the agenda of the following Conference the institution of an Arbitration Court. This would mean important progress in two respects: from a practical standpoint, the recourse to arbitration would be facilitated if it were not necessary to organize the tribunal while the conflict was still exasperating the minds on both sides, and from a theoretical standpoint the existence of such a Court would show the state of progress of the society of nations. Indeed, it is only by the permanent existence of a jurisdiction

resting on law that a society manifests itself as legally organized.

The question occupied the three following conferences.

The Brussels Conference, of 1895, on the proposal of two members whom the Union still rejoices to see at its head, the Hon. Philip Stanhope, now Lord Weardale, and the venerable Belgian Senator Auguste Houzeau de Lehaie, voted a draft convention in fourteen articles, which was communicated to the different Governments.

This draft reposed on the following principles:

1. National sovereignty remains inalienable and inviolable;

2. The adherence of each Government to the constitution of an International Permanent Court should be purely voluntary;

3. All adherent states should be on a footing of perfect equality before the International Permanent Court;

4. The judgments of the Permanent Court should have the form of an executive sentence.

Four years later, in 1899, the first Peace Conference was convened at The Hague. The great Convention voted by the Conference "For the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes" to a large extent rests on the convention drafted by the Interparliamentary Union. Thus it places all states on a footing of perfect equality with respect to the Arbitration Court created by the Convention.

This was a real victory for the ideas championed by the Union. It has even been said that the calling of the Hague Conference itself was due to the inter-

parliamentary movement, especially to the Budapesth Conference in 1896.

CALLING OF THE SECOND HAGUE CONFERENCE

And this explains why the St. Louis Conference in 1904, which was presided over by Mr. RICHARD BARTHOLDT, Member of Congress, and Founder of the American Group of the Union, took the initiative to solicit the convocation of another Peace Conference.

Mr. THEODORE E. BURTON, then member of Congress, now United States Senator, introduced the question at St. Louis. In the resolution voted on his motion, there are three interesting points to be noted. Two subjects are indicated as worthy of discussion at the proposed Conference: 1, The conclusion of arbitration treaties between the states represented, stipulating their obligation to have recourse to arbitration; 2, the periodicity of the international congresses, which would thus form a legislative institution within the society of nations, by the side of the judiciary created by the first Hague Conference.

Thirdly, the resolution ends with a respectful request to the President of the United States of America to take the initiative of calling the conference.

On the 24th of September, 1904, the Secretary General of the Union, MR. GOBAT of Switzerland, on behalf of the members of the Interparliamentary Conferences, transmitted the resolution to PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT at the White House in Washington. Mr. Roosevelt ended his reply to the address with the following words: "At an early date I shall issue the call for the conference you request."

This initiative produced, three years later, the meeting of the second Hague Conference.

MODEL ARBITRATION TREATY

In the meantime the Union was actively occupied with the framing of the programme for this new Conference. This work entirely filled the time of the two general assemblies, at Brussels in 1905, and at London in 1906. On a special point the London Conference voted a draft of an international convention and took a new step forward in the arbitration question, still the chief object of the Union. Indeed, if the Court instituted by the first Hague Conference should be able to exert all its usefulness, it was necessary that the states engaged themselves to have recourse to arbitration for certain classes of conflicts.

The model arbitration treaty was originally due to the initiative of MR. RICHARD BARTHOLDT. It was voted by the London Conference on the remarkable report submitted, on behalf of a special Commission, by His Excellency ERNEST DE PLENER, late Austrian Minister of Finance. At the Hague Conference of 1907 it was adopted by the Portuguese Delegates and by them submitted to the Arbitration Commission. Around this draft convention were fought the most prolonged struggles of the conference. During these debates the draft was limited in certain respects, but considerably extended in others. At first received very coolly, it found successively a more and more numerous following, and at last it united the votes of thirty-two states, out of the forty-four represented at The Hague.

This was not sufficient. The principle of the necessity of a unanimous vote, which is regularly followed in diplomatic conferences, again prevailed, as the minority refused to give way. The Conference passed a unanimous declaration, however, in favor of the

principle of obligatory arbitration: "Some conflicts, especially those concerning the interpretation and application of international conventions, are liable to be submitted to obligatory arbitration without any restriction."

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNION

The Union could point to a moral victory: at The Hague the majority had rallied to its standpoint; but it had not found unanimous favor. In order to gain a complete victory it was necessary to redouble the efforts and to concentrate them.

From this standpoint the 15th Interparliamentary Conference should be looked at. It met at Berlin in September, 1908, and was of particular importance for the organization of the Union.

During the first years the Union had no permanent organization. The Conferences invited their members to form "Interparliamentary Committees" in each country. This is the origin of the present groups. At the Rome Conference, in 1891, the foundation of a Central Office was discussed, and the creation of a provisional secretariat was decided upon. A final organization was not instituted until the Berne Conference, in 1892. It founded the Interparliamentary Bureau, which should serve as Central Office of the Union, under management of the Swiss member of the Committee.

The Bureau was at first under the control of a permanent Committee, the rules of which for some years were rather unstable and changing. It was only at the Christiania Conference, in 1899, that some stability was obtained, through the creation of the INTER-

PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL, composed of two members from each Group.

The aim of the reorganization decided upon at Berlin in 1908 was, then, on one hand, to strengthen the central authorities of the Union with a view to create a strong executive; on the other, to vivify, through this concentration of the forces, the national Groups which must needs be the essential supporting elements of the institution.

This new organization necessitated considerable expenditure. In order to meet this, the Union made an appeal to its different groups, asking them to assure an annual revenue. Before this the Union had been supported by the individual contributions of members, one state only, Norway, having voted annually an official subvention. At the Berlin Conference, Lord Weardale, one of the principal promoters of the reorganization, announced that the British Government proposed to grant to the Union an annual subsidy of £300. He was also able to announce that an International Committee, the representative of which was the American Branch of the ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL CONCILIATION, was willing to guarantee an annual subvention for five years, or until the different states had resolved upon their attitude toward the Union.

The appeal of the Union has been responded to by nearly all the states in which Groups are in existence. Only in a very few cases the Groups themselves have to contribute to the funds. The Union is now assured of an annual income of between $12,000 and $14,000.

This official connection between the Union and the Governments is a fact of great importance. The nations do not pay for nothing. They give their money

because they expect to have something in return, and they have, so to speak, bound themselves to take into serious consideration the drafts presented to them by the Interparliamentarians. The Union has thus become one of the active elements in the organization of the coming Society of Nations.

THE NEW ORGANIZATION

The new organization may be said to coördinate in a wise way the different forces of the Union. Its highest authority is the CONFERENCE, which meets annually, or every second year.[1]

All the members of the Union are entitled to meet at the Conference, but several Groups have adopted the practice of designating DELEGATES. The Conference passes resolutions on the problems before the Union and maps out a sort of programme for the national Groups during the ensuing year.

The COUNCIL is the highest administrative authority of the Union. It decides what questions may be brought before the Conferences and passes upon the draft resolutions to be submitted to them. It has, besides, the control of the finances, accepts gifts and subventions and fixes the estimates for the following year. It nominates the treasurer and the secretary general and passes upon their annual reports.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of five has the control of the Interparliamentary Bureau, which is managed by the Secretary General, fixing its annual programme and directing the main lines of its activity.

NATIONAL GROUPS

The most important elements in the Interparliamentary Organization, however, must needs be the NATIONAL GROUPS. If they are not really active and living forces, the best and wisest resolutions of the Conferences will have no sanction.

[1] The next Conference is to meet at The Hague in August or September next for the inauguration of the Peace Palace.

The Union is at present composed of twenty-two Groups [1] and some 3,600 individual parliamentarians figure on its lists. This appears quite an imposing number, but it should be borne in mind—first, that the entire total of all parliamentarians in these countries amounts to 9,718, so that the Union at present only registers about 37% of active parliamentarians in these states; secondly, that there are some twenty constitutional states as yet completely outside the Union, as, for instance, all of the Latin-American States; thirdly, that the existing Groups differ widely in number and in activity. While some are splendidly organized and have established a real influence on their Parliaments, others are borne up only by the devoted interest of some few individual members. Even if the Group is numerous, this is of small use if it has no corporate life of its own.

WORK BEFORE THE UNION

The great object before the Union is to prepare through parliamentary action the passing into international law of the reforms it has at heart, above everything else the substitution, in international disputes, of pacific methods for naked force. We have seen how, since the institution of the Peace Conferences at The Hague, the Interparliamentary Conferences have centered their activity round the preparation of the work to be done there, and it is quite natural that at present, when the day of the third

[1] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Servia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Switzerland and the United States of America.

Hague Conference is drawing near, the minds of the Interparliamentarians are more and more bent on the programme of that meeting. Several Commissions have been instituted in order to study a whole series of problems to be brought before the Conference, and eventually to prepare draft conventions.

No international legislature is in existence. International law is enacted through treaties or conventions and no power is party to a treaty without its having been ratified by the competent authorities of the country. This gives a twofold duty to the Interparliamentary Union. Not only must it try to prepare a programme and proposals for the diplomatic Conferences entrusted with the drafting of international Conventions, but when this part of the work is done it must try to bring it about through the action of its groups that these conventions obtain the ratification of the different states.

Thus, at the last Interparliamentary Conference, which met at Geneva on September 18, 19 and 20, 1912, there were discussed problems of international law and policy, such as arbitration and mediation, limitation of armaments and aërial warfare, organization of the Peace Conferences at The Hague and the right of nationalities, and for several of these questions Commissions of study were instituted which will have to report to a later Conference. The Conference also voted, however, a series of resolutions asking the Groups to address their Governments with a view to obtain from them the ratification of several important international conventions which have not yet passed into the statute book of the Society of Nations, above all the Hague Convention as to a Prize Court and the Declaration of London on Naval Law.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Nos. 1–54, inclusive (April, 1907, to May, 1912). Including papers by Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, George Trumbull Ladd, Elihu Root, Barrett Wendell, Charles E. Jefferson, Seth Low, William James, Andrew Carnegie, Philander C. Knox, Pope Pius X, Heinrich Lammasch, Norman Angell, and others. A list of titles and authors will be sent on application.

Special Bulletin: War Practically Preventable, and Arguments for Universal Peace, by Rev. Michael Clune, June, 1912.

55. The International Mind. Opening Address at the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, by Nicholas Murray Butler, June, 1912.

56. The Irrationality of War. On Science as an Element in the Developing of International Good Will and Understanding, by Sir Oliver Lodge, July, 1912.

57. The Interest of the Wage-earner in the Present Status of the Peace Movement; Address Delivered at the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, by Charles Patrick Neill, August, 1912.

58. The Relation of Social Theory to Public Policy, by Franklin H. Giddings, September, 1912.

59. The Double Standard in Regard to Fighting, by George M. Stratton, October, 1912.

60. As to Two Battleships. Contributions to the Debate upon the Naval Appropriation Bill in the House of Representatives, November, 1912.

61. The Cosmopolitan Club Movement, by Louis P. Lochner, December, 1912.

62. The Spirit of Self-Government; Address Delivered at the 144th Anniversary Banquet of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, by Elihu Root, January, 1913.

63. The Time to Test Our Faith in Arbitration, by William Howard Taft, and Should the Panama Canal Tolls Controversy be Arbitrated? by Amos S. Hershey, February, 1913.

Special Bulletin: Who Makes War? From the London Times, February, 1913.

64. Internationalism; A Selected List of Books, Pamphlets and Periodicals, by Frederick C. Hicks, March, 1913.

65. The Interparliamentary Union, by Christian L. Lange, April, 1913.

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